CHAPTER 2

AEROSPACE VEHICLE DESIGNATION SYSTEM

A. GENERAL INFORMATION

All DoD aerospace vehicles are assigned designations referred to as MDS designator. This designation system does not permit unique or specified symbols not described in this List. The system also does not designate aerospace vehicles that are of no direct interest to the Department of Defense. A complete description of the designation system is found in the Joint Regulation (reference (b)) and in the appendices to this List. Appendix A describes and lists aircraft designator and Appendix B describes and lists rocket, probe, guided missile, and space system designators. Configuration numbers, block numbers, and serial numbers are not part of an MDS designator but are used to identify further configuration or specific vehicles. These numbers are not listed herein and do not require coordination with ASC/ENSD. The following section defines the general terms used in both appendices.

B. DEFINITION OF TERMS

The following definitions of symbols and numbers are listed in the sequence in which they would appear in an aerospace vehicle MIX.

1. Status Prefix (optional). **This** symbol is used only when needed to indicate that an aerospace vehicle is not standard because of its test, modification, experimental, or prototype design. For aircraft, the symbol appears to the immediate left of the modified mission symbol or basic mission symbol. For rockets and missiles, it is to the immediate left of the launch environment symbol or mission symbol.

2. **Modified Mission (aircraft only) (optional).** **This** symbol is used only when needed to identify modifications to the basic mission of an aircraft and appears to the immediate left of the basic mission symbol. Only one modified mission symbol shall be used in any one MDS.

3. **Launch Environment (rockets and missiles only) (required). This** symbol identifies the launch environment or platform parameters. It appears to the immediate left of the mission symbol. Only one of these symbols shall be used in any one MIX.

4. **Basic Mission (required for standard vehicles).** **This** symbol identifies an aerospace vehicle's primary function or capability. For standard vehicles (e.g., bombers, fighters), it appears to the immediate left of the design number separated by a dash. For nonstandard vehicles, when used, it appears to the immediate left of the vehicle type symbol.

5. **Vehicle Type (nonstandard vehicles only). This** symbol is required only for nonstandard vehicles, such as helicopter, vertical takeoff and landing, missile, space, etc. A **basic mission** or

modified mission symbol must accompany the vehicle type symbol. It appears to the immediate left of the design number, separated by a dash.

6. Design Number {rewired). This number identifies major design changes within the same basic mission. Design numbers run consecutively beginning with "1" for each category. It appears to the immediate right of the basic mission symbol or vehicle type symbol, separated by a dash.

7. Series (rewired). This symbol identifies the **first** production model of a particular design number and later models representing major modifications that significantly alter the aerospace vehicle systems components or change the logistics support of the vehicle. Consecutive series symbols, starting with "A", appear to the immediate right of the design number. To avoid confusion, **do not** use the letters "I" and "O" for this symbol.

8. Configuration or Component Number (rockets and missiles only). This number is used only when denoting configuration changes affecting performance, tactics, or integral components of a weapon system that require the same operations or logistics support as the aerospace vehicle. It appears to the immediate right of the series symbol separated by a dash. Each Military Department determines it own method for assigning configuration numbers.

9. **Block Number (aircraft only). This** number identifies a production group of identically configured aircraft within a particular design series. The numbers are assigned in multiples of five (01, 05 and 10). The Military Departments may reserve intermediate block numbers for field modifications.

10. Serial Number. This number identifies a specific aerospace vehicle. Each Military Department determines its own method for assigning serial numbers.